

The Representative Subject Differences between Modernist and Postmodernist Discourse: A Comparative Evaluation for Novels of Ask-i Memnu (Forbidden Love) and Aldatma (Cheating)

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Abstract

Throughout history, novels have been evaluated as narratives comprising the unofficial reflections of societal problems. Due to these properties they had become reference works for studying the reflections of societal phenomena, especially during times of change, on individuals. Every period creates its own manner of narration. New writing types emerge in novels at times when the existing ones fail to depict the change and transformation in society. The emergence of the Turkish novel corresponds to the aftermath of Tanzimat (reorganization) reforms. In this context, the Turkish novel did play both an important societal role in the transformation of the Ottoman Empire into the modern nation-state of Turkey. This role crystallizes in the new manners of living and thinking procured in individuals by changes in values that accompany with societal changes. Novels that were being published in newspapers on an episode by episode basis during the pre-republican and early-republican eras, had been effective in the acceptance of the values of modernity and hence of the republic by the people. Authors of the period had been influenced by contemporary developments of nationalism, that had been occurring in the world since the French revolution, and embraced the nation state, which means the modern state, with all its values. In this study, two novels that treat extramarital men-women affairs, namely the forbidden love, and that reflect the respective changes in values regarding this theme, have been analyzed. Halit Ziya Usakligil's first modernist book entitled *Ask-i Memnu* (Forbidden Love) and Ahmet Altan's contemporary postmodern book entitled *Aldatma* (Cheating) are antagonistic in terms of their representations of the values of 'marriage', 'forbidden love', and 'women' in these contexts. This antagonism reveals the change from modern to a postmodern understanding of values and the representation of the characters in these two novels. This distinction is crystallized in the titles of the books. Usakligil who had written his book in 1900 had chosen to entitle it '*Ask-i Memnu* (Forbidden Love)', while Altan who had written on the same topic in 2002 had chosen to name it '*Aldatma* (Cheating)'. Even this naming preference gives us clues about the respective authors' value judgments in naming an extramarital relationship. In a modernist novel this phenomenon had been named

'forbidden love' while in a novel of the postmodern period it had been named 'cheating' in a negative and accusative manner.

This study comparatively examines how the representations of these values are presented through the characters in the novels, whether they reproduce the current discourse of the period, whether these values feed the male-dominant discourse using Teun Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis Method (ESAY).

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Throughout history, novels have been evaluated as narratives comprising the unofficial reflections of societal problems. Due to these properties they had become reference works for studying the reflections of societal phenomena, especially during times of change, on individuals. Every period creates its own manner of narration. New writing types emerge in novels at times when the existing ones fail to depict the change and transformation in society. The emergence of the Turkish novel corresponds to the aftermath of Tanzimat (reorganization) reforms. In this context, the Turkish novel did play both an important societal role in the transformation of the Ottoman Empire into the modern nation-state of Turkey. This role crystallizes in the new manners of living and thinking procured in individuals by changes in values that accompany with societal changes. Novels that were being published in newspapers on an episode by episode basis during the pre-republican and early-republican eras, had been effective in the acceptance of the values of modernity and hence of the republic by the people. Authors of the period had been influenced by contemporary developments of nationalism, that had been occurring in the world since the French revolution, and embraced the nation state, which means the modern state, with all its values. In this study, two novels that treat extramarital men-women affairs, namely the forbidden love, and that reflect the respective changes in values regarding this theme, have been analyzed. Halit Ziya Usaklıgil's first modernist book entitled *Ask-i Memnu* (Forbidden Love) and Ahmet Altan's contemporary postmodern book entitled *Aldatma* (Cheating) are antagonistic in terms of their representations of the values of 'marriage', 'forbidden love', and 'women' in these contexts. This antagonism reveals the change from modern to a postmodern understanding of values and the representation of the characters in these two novels. This distinction is crystallized in the titles of the books. Usaklıgil who had written his book in 1900 had chosen to entitle it '*Ask-i Memnu* (Forbidden Love)', while Altan who had written on the same topic in 2002 had chosen to name in '*Aldatma* (Cheating)'. Even this naming preference gives us clues about the respective authors' value judgments in naming an extramarital relationship. In a modernist novel this phenomenon had been named 'forbidden love' while in a novel of the postmodern period it had been named 'cheating' in a negative and accusative manner.

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Introduction

This study comparatively analyzes the representations of the concepts of marriage, love and forbidden love in Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil's novel *Aşk-ı Memnu* (2005), which was considered as the first modernist novel (İleri, 1985), and Ahmet Altan's *Aldatma* (2002) in terms of modernist discourse and postmodernist discourse. It has been investigated how these concepts were represented on the basis of novel characters, what messages were given to the reader and whether the discourse in the novel reproduced the dominant discourse at

the time they were written. For this purpose, the selected sample paragraphs have been explained with Teun Van Dijke's Critical Discourse Analysis Method (ESAY). The purpose of explaining with samples is both a necessity because the novel is too long for such a study and also to give meaning to the obtained results with the short passages quoted from the text (Fidan and Öztürk, 2015).

Why the novels are included within the scope of the study can be explained in the following way: Language and novel as its most advanced product in this context is the greatest abstraction of humanity. Therefore, the novel is one of the important areas where a detailed and multilayered study of thinking and lifestyles created by the mutual interaction between the modernist and postmodernist periods and discourse. In other words, the novel is an area suitable for the researcher to work on meanings with Foucault's method, that is, with a meticulousness of "archaeological" excavation and to analyze them in order to find answers to his questions (Foucault, 2016).

Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil's *Aşk-ı Memnu* novel has taken its place as the biggest classic of modern Turkish novel in the literary literature (İleri, 1985). Ahmet Altan's novel *Aldatmak* is a postmodernist novel that keeps society and researchers busy for a long time. The main topics of discussion and criticism are the way the author handles the theme of sexuality and, at this point, the personality he assigns to the representation of women (Ergin, 2017). While the predominant sentiment in Uşaklıgil's novel is love, in Altan's novel it appears as physical pleasure.

The understanding of how these themes are presented through the female identity in the discourses of two modernist and postmodernist novelists and why they are presented in this way and the content of the message they give to the reader indicate the periodic differences in the perception of these themes. In this sense, it will also be eye-opening for other studies.

Literature Survey: Discourse in Modernist and Postmodernist Novel

According to Berman, modernism is the tension on all individuals created by the constant change that occurs in the society they live in. For this reason, he defines "Modernism as a struggle to feel at home in a constantly changing world..." (Berman, 2003: 11). It can be said that the manifestation of modernity in all areas from architecture to art is the result of the dialectic between man and modernity. One of the most detailed and in-depth reflections of this interaction is the novel. In other words, the novel indicates the reality of the period as "an area in which both the modernity and the resistance to modernity, a re-defined indigenusness according to modernity was built" (Gürbilek, 2004: 176). However, the postmodernist novelist has lost its relationship with reality. "... the reason for moving away from reality is not to better reflect life in a more appropriate way, but to question and loosen the connection of the novel with reality. This is the characteristic of the postmodern novel (Moran, 2016: 116-117).

While the modern novel explores the ways of knowing reality, the postmodern novel is about how to present the representation of reality. In modernism there is tragedy, the subjectivity of man and his story are revealed in a tragic way. However, postmodernism makes the contradictions and inconsistencies of human beings a subject of fun. When we examine the characters in the postmodernist novel, it is almost impossible to find a universal human representation close to the sum of the features shared by humans. In this context, in the postmodern discourse, the human has been detached from its reality and replaced by the hollow word individual (Berman, 2003).

Human's effort to become a subject can only be meaningful with his will and desire to intervene in the social structure from any point. However, the postmodern discourse

directly excludes such a possibility and instead recommends that the individual live his life by experiencing every comfort and pleasure within the boundaries drawn to him (Orkunoğlu, 2007). Thus, Rosenau says, "Post-modernism, partly, may be the luxury of a generation that seems far from famine, a generation that is engaged with freedom rather than necessities, the individual rather than the collective" (Rosenau, 1998: 33).

The modernist or postmodernist understanding of the novelist is reflected in his literary discourse. Discourse analysis is an effective method for revealing the content absorbed in the text. The paragraphs which form the essence and have been subjected to analysis in the novels have been determined by the theoretical elective method. In this study, the presentation of these value representations in novels and its function as a social message have been investigated.

Two Novels: Aşk-ı Memnu and Aldatmak

Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil makes deep sociopsychological analyses about humans based on the characters he created in his novel Aşk-ı Memnu written in 1900. The effort to penetrate and deeply understand the inner world of human, which is seen in all the great writers, is a distinctive feature of this novel. According to Tanpınar, these characteristics are what differentiate modern novel from the traditional (Tanpınar, 2011: 80).

At the time the novel was written, the Ottoman Empire was living their last rays. As in the whole world, the winds of change are blowing in Turkey as well. On the one hand, the curiosity and excitement towards the new, and on the other, the endeavor to continue the existence of the past habits, traditions, attitudes and ways of thinking are intertwined.

Altan wrote his novel Aldatma in 2002 at a time when the social space was relatively calm. Altan's "Aldatma" novel, despite being considered within the concept of "mediocre literature" by some authorities, is a book that should not be overlooked in terms of the number of readers and the many debates in the media (Kara, 2017). What Özdemir wrote about the reason why he analyzed this novel is also valid for this study: "it is such a novel and author that it is exhibited in the entrances of even toy stores and countless unrelated shops, and has become a "Turkish bestseller". In such a poor society with a low reading rate, it was able to sell like hotcakes at least for a period (Özdemir, 2004: 1). The periods as well as the relations of the writers with the dominant ideology and the way of thinking of the time they lived in are settled in their discourse.

"Now the period or era has changed. People have entered a phase in which they hold nothing other than themselves important, discuss nothing other than their individuality, and think about nothing. This is called the 'post-intellectual era'. And the post-intellectual period corresponds to a collapse resulting from the inability to carry even the mental burden of the post-modern era." (Celal, 2009).

Gündoğdu cannot go without saying this about Ahmet Altan's Aldatma novel; "No book or author I have read and disliked so far has belittled human as Ahmet Altan" (Gündoğdu, 2014). According to Ecevit (2001), in postmodern literature everything is far from serious. Postmodernism has "a structure that does not want to put its mark on any principle/rule/theory/criterion/philosophy/system".

Methodology

In this study, the values of the love, marriage and forbidden love themes which are represented through the characters of the Aşk-ı Memnu novel of the modern period and the Aldatma novel of the postmodern period were examined by using ESAY.

The ESAY which was developed by Teun Van Dijk was mainly used on the texts selected from the novels. As for language and discourse, the novel stands out as the most

advanced type of literature as a communication language. According to Eagleton (2014), the value judgments that establish literature vary historically, moreover, they are closely related to social ideologies. According to Eagleton, value judgments are the assumptions used by social groups to provide and implement power over others, and the intervention of these groups into the literature is influential on determining which literature will rise (Eagleton, 2014: 40).

On the other hand, the political stance and social identity are built not only in the author's personality but also in his works. So, literature and sociology have always been interrelated. Especially the novel is suitable for the multidimensional analysis of the thought atmosphere and events of its period as it can bring people into existence in a literary universe with their private and social worlds. In fact, according to Köprülü (1986), the newspaper served as a platform where politics and literature intermingled with the innovation movement taking place in Turkish literature. Whereas, the novel is a kind of literature that brings the literature closer to sociology with its contribution to the climate of thought.

According to Eagleton (1996), "ideology is a matter of discourse, not language. Ideology is about how language is actually used to create specific effects among certain human subjects". Discourse is such a structure that even the most apolitical writer has a political stance embedded in the text. Therefore, finding and analyzing it critically is an effort to understand the content of the actual message of the text. And, this study is the product of such an effort.

Characters and Value Representations in Aşk-ı Memnu

In this study, the simplified 5th edition of Uşaklıgil's Aşk-ı Memnu novel published by Özgür Publications has been used. Uşaklıgil states in the preface he wrote for this edition in 1939 that he was content with the simplification of the book's language. This statement of the author is important and it has been effective in the selection of the edition to be analyzed.

The story takes place around two families living in Istanbul in the early 1900s. One of the families is the family of the widow Firdevs Hanım, who has two daughters called Bihter and Peyker, and the other one is the family of Adnan Bey, who is also a widow with two kids called Nihal and Bülent. Firdevs Hanım is a fun-loving "wanton" lady seeking a rich husband. They often come across with Adnan Bey during the boat trips on the Bosphorus. While Firdevs Hanım dreams of marrying Adnan Bey, he desires to marry her daughter, Bihter. Bihter accepts Adnan Bey's offer despite all the objections of her mother. She was not only influenced by Adnan Bey's wealth, but also wants to get rid of her mother.

While the first part of Uşaklıgil's novel comes to an end, the characters are clarified in terms of their physical features and personalities and the reader is informed about the characters as well as the social atmosphere of the period. The life with servants and cooks in Adnan Bey's seaside residence and the fact that his daughter Nihal was taking piano lessons in addition to French and Turkish lessons present the pre-Republican period's imagination about the republic that represents modernity. In this context, modernity in terms of Adnan Bey and the social class he represents entails having a good command of western languages and art. Speaking a foreign language, studying in Europe or America is seen as a determinant of modernity in terms of this segment.

Another important character of the novel is Adnan Bey's young nephew Behlül. Behlül, who is a woman-chaser and fond of entertainment, appears as the contrast of Adnan Bey in the novel. While Adnan Bey is a very intellectual and elegant person who values the

institution of family and marriage, Behlül is just the opposite as he is so ignorant, irresponsible and fond of entertainment and women.

Bihter, who marries Adnan Bey, spends her early times establishing authority over the employees as the new lady of the residence and shopping freely. Bihter feels sympathy towards Adnan Bey's children and wants to be loved by them; she asks Nihal "You will love me, right?" and continues "It won't be possible not to love me anyway... I will love you so, so much that eventually, you will also love me" (Uşaklıgil, 2005: 130). The efforts of Bihter will be successful. Distancing from her father due to this marriage, Nihal will feel closeness towards Bihter (Uşaklıgil, 2005: 137). The representation of the stepmother figure depicted as cruel and evil in the traditional discourse is not included in *Aşk-ı Memnu*.

On the other hand, Behlül is not only hitting on Bihter's mother but also her sister Peyker. Peyker who is fed up with his persistent attitude opens up to her sister;

"You know what, Bihter? That man who is your nephew or whatever is a strange and brave guy! You know I can't tolerate even the slightest betrayal to my brother-in-law's friendship. I didn't marry my husband with the idea of betraying him; if he doesn't leave me alone, I will have no choice but not to accept him into my house..." (Uşaklıgil, 2005:176).

Behlül's sexual interest in Peyker and Firdevs Hanım are not welcomed among the employees in the residence. The servants bear a grudge against Bihter for these incidents they consider shameful. As can be seen here, the dominant way of thinking and discourse of the time are revealed in the subclass's way of thinking: concepts of honor and loyalty gain meaning over women from the perspective of this class. Bihter, Firdevs Hanım and Peyker are judged and held responsible instead of Behlül.

Over time, Bihter falls in love with Behlül. She no longer desires her husband's attention and cannot tolerate his touch. Bihter is tormented with these feelings and she questions the place of Adnan Bey in her life. She loves Behlül, but does not see this as a right to herself; "But how will she love? To love, isn't it something that is forbidden and impossible for her now?" (Uşaklıgil, 2005:219). After a while, heavy with the feelings of fear and guilt, she finds herself in the middle of an affair. Behlül is happy with no degrees; According to his thinking, "There was only one reason why a woman would resist him: foolishness! What an act of revenge was it against Peyker for having Bihter (Uşaklıgil, 2005: 250).

The relationship between Bihter and Behlül, Bihter going to Behlül's room softly at night, their intense sex, the harsh and humiliating words of servants who are aware of the situation about Bihter are presented to the reader. However, there is a very objective measure in this presentation; the reader is neither directed to hate nor to approve Bihter. In contrast, the reader closely witnesses the complex emotional world of the novel character and the confusion between guilt and rebellion. This discourse by Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil throughout the novel is valid not only for Bihter but for all characters. As the author puts our eyes in sight, he also reveals the emotions, contradictions, strengths and weaknesses of the human being. The reader closely witnesses the inner world of each character, their delicate contemplations, wounds from the past, anger and hope or despair. This discourse makes it difficult for the reader to judge and stigmatize the novel characters at once.

Nihal is the most unfortunate person in the novel. Nihal is a naive child who found herself in a stormy process full of uncertainties during her transition from childhood to adolescence. The anger she felt for her father at the beginning turns towards Bihter. On the other hand, Bihter's mother, Firdevs Hanım, discovered the relationship between her daughter and Behlül and planted the idea of marrying Nihal into Behlül's mind. Behlül, who started to get bored with Bihter, likes this idea and informs Adnan Bey of his desire to marry Nihal. Adnan Bey becomes content with this request and tells Behlül that he would

communicate it to his daughter. However, he adds that his daughter will give the final decision. The fact that Adnan Bey gives her daughter a say about choosing the man she will marry is a modernist attitude for that period. With these news, Nihal is drawn into romantic dreams. Just at the moment she feels all alone and insecure in the huge residence, Behlül appears as a safe harbor for her to take shelter. One day when Behlül and Nihal are deemed to be engaged, Nihal finds a note that fell from Behlül's pocket. The note says: "She confessed to everything. It is no longer possible. Be present today no matter what". Nihal recognizes Firdevs Hanım's writing and senses the relationship between Bihter and Behlül by understanding that Bihter is the who confesses.

"So, this woman who replaced her mother, this wife of her father, this creature who was slowly taking away everything from her with ruthless wrath, is not reaching her nails to take her final happiness away." (Uşaklıgil, 2005: 467).

Behlül tells Bihter that she should not prevent his marriage with Nihal and that it was not the end of their relationship, and the best solution for Bihter was to leave the house secretly. Nihal becomes ill with the fact that she discovered. She lies on her bed half-stunned. Adnan Bey waits for her daughter at the bedside desperately and distraughtly. At this very moment, the door opens and Beşir, who is the son of one of the servants and who loves Nihal deeply enters the room. Beşir tells everything to Adnan Bey.

Behlül escapes from the residence. Bihter is helpless; it seems impossible for her to live in such a situation;

"...she entered into her husband's room. She ran into the little closet, pulled his drawer. There it was. She took it, and while she was taking it, it was possible that her husband would come looking for it now. This was highly possible. However, if there is a criminal to kill, - she was laughing with a wild smile as she was thinking about it- she would do this mission by herself" (Uşaklıgil, 2005: 508).

As a result, Bihter kills herself with her husband's pistol. She married a man she did not love, fell in love with another man, betrayed her husband by having sex with him, and turned into the person she hated the most, her mother. On top of all this, Behlül asked her to allow "to smooth everything over" by not interfering his marriage to Nihal. He wanted to evade Bihter who loved him so much, and seeing that it was not possible, he just ran away. It is actually these thoughts that killed her.

As a result of the evaluation of Aşk-ı Memnu characters with ESAY, we can say that:

The first result that can be reached is that extramarital relationship, i.e. "forbidden love" is not viewed from a perspective that endorses or regenerates the dominant view of the period. This does not mean that the perspective in question is never reflected in the plot. The dominant discourse in the novel is given from the perspective of various classes. For example, while Firdevs Hanım is condemned by her surroundings as a person who was disloyal to her husband and continues to lead a wanton life after her husband's death, she is not excluded from the life of the community. On the other hand, Adnan Bey's servants, in other words, the group representing those with low income and relatively low level of education reacts harshly for Adnan Bey's young wife to have an affair with his nephew Behlül. However, it is important not to ignore the important differences separating this forbidden love from the loves of Firdevs Hanım: The first is the social class difference. As known, this section refers to a social layer in which the modernist movement reached later or has never reached at all. The second is that the forbidden love relationship is experienced under the same roof. Adnan Bey is their patron and source of bread, whom they have been serving for years and love deeply. They feel responsible for him.

Another result is that the Bihter character, over whom the forbidden love phenomenon is narrated, is not a strict representation of the dominant thought. Bihter is in a "stepmother" position by marrying a man with two children. But she is far from a representation of a wicked and cruel stepmother. She loves Adnan Bey's children and wants to be loved by them. The writer lets the reader witness the inner world of each character with his discourse. In this context, knowing the emotion and thought world of the representative subjects and dominating the dynamics and life experiences that make up this world prevent the reader from reaching the dominant judiciary with ease and makes them think. In this context, the modernist novel transforms reading into a process of active thinking rather than a passive action. The fact that the readers put themselves into the shoes of the representative subject and experience the feelings with him/her enables them to think about the incidents they have perhaps never experienced before.

Characters and Value Representations in Aldatmak Novel

The first edition of Ahmet Altan's Aldatmak novel, which was published in September 2002 by Can Publications, has been analyzed. On the cover of the book, there is a woman lying down with her skirt open. The title "Aldatmak" just above the picture is quite accurate considering the logic of marketing. In a view that links postmodernist discourse to capitalism (Jameson 2008), postmodernism is a stage in the development of capitalism and it is the cultural logic of capitalism. In this context, looking at the literary work from the marketing logic of capitalism makes it compulsory to design it as a commodity. In other words, the author, who adopts the postmodern approach, attempts to produce a commodity in which he can obtain material gains by waiving from the characteristics of being unique, original and free with a conscious choice. As referenced by Hilmi Yavuz, Barthes states in his article titled "The Death of the Author" that the one who speaks in a literary work is not the author himself but the 'language'. According to him, the text belongs to the reader rather than the author (Yavuz, 2009). This approach frees the author from the responsibility of the message. As for the reader, people cannot personally experience life anymore, as Agamben says. This language is mediated by the media (Murray, 2013). In this context, people internalize the experiences of representative subjects that are spoken by the discourses in texts. Moreover, people derived the opinions they thought they had acquired about the book they read from media messages created using advertising and marketing techniques. The most selling image in the Meta market is undoubtedly the sexuality represented through the female body. Ahmet Altan's Aldatmak novel has emerged as the product of such work. The title and cover of the book are just as suitable for this understanding. The choice of an erotic picture with only one woman on the cover, rather than a couple, should be read as a clear reference to the first thing that comes or should come to mind as for the action of "cheating".

Subject and Discourse in Aldatma Novel

Almost the only person in the novel is Aydan. In the story, there is Aydan, her husband Haluk, and Cem as the man she is having sex with. Aydan is the only character who can be subject to a narrative and who is experiencing a number of actions in life. Others seem to have had to take part in the story as carelessly improvised figures so that she can carry out those actions. All the characters, including Aydan, are not present in the imagination of the reader because they cannot create a solid image of their physical appearance or personality characteristics.

Aydan is a young, beautiful woman who works as a deputy director at a big US bank. She has a successful career. Her husband, Haluk is a surgeon who is also a symbol of success in his profession. They live in a rich neighborhood with their little daughter. Emphasis on wealth and success is attention-grabbing in the discourse of the book. Aydan is also the

manager of the site she lives in. During a meeting, they decide to make a playground to the site.

The model of society proposed by the discourse in the novel is noteworthy and corresponds to the postmodern period. The professions of representative subjects point to a class of high income, which is composed of surgeons, architects, managers in an American bank. The private and secure site of this class, large and comfortable houses, the site's swimming pool are frequently mentioned.

Aydan goes to architect Cem Kırkoğlu, who lives on the same site to discuss the playground. She is impressed by the fact that Cem is living in the most expensive and biggest apartment of the site;

"The man was very rich. She felt that weird fright and respect mixed with shyness as well like all the rich people when they see someone richer than themselves" (Altan, 2002: 9).

Aydan is influenced by the man's wealth. This influence will manifest itself as "respect mixed with fright and shyness" as she understands him being richer than herself. The author generalizes and normalizes this as a feeling that all the rich people feel when they see someone richer than themselves. For some reason, Aydan opens the buttons of her shirt before she knocks the door, so that her breasts are slightly visible. The author explains this behavior of Aydan as follows:

"...like every woman impressed by the wealth, intelligence, or power of the man in front of her, she wanted to impress the one she was impressed by".

"Like every woman" expression goes on throughout the book. Thus, Altan generalizes all the movements of Aydan as unique to all women. However, in this discourse, the only thing an impressed woman can do to impress the man she is impressed by is to open the top of her shirt or similar approaches. Another attention-grabbing point is that admiration for wealth turns into disgust when it comes to poverty.

"In the traffic lights at the corner of the wide street, a crowd of children with dusty hair, with a dirty face, a ripped undershirt, fluttered around the car fluctuating like a blurred water; they were trying to wipe the windows with the rags in their hands, and pushed each other with their bony, skinny elbows to grab the money they thought would be given."

In the face of the rich class, the poor class is placed with these lines. In response to the beautiful, clean, healthy, elite, educated main characters, the dirty, dowdy, skinny, cheeky, begging children appear only once in the novel as a 'bulge' and 'discomfort' and then disappear. The fascination with richness and strength is so dominating to the discourse of the novel that the word "success" is only mentioned six times on one page (Altan, 2002: 26).

The common features of Aydan, Haluk and Cem are that they are all successful, healthy, young, beautiful and good-looking. Aydan is a successful assistant manager who knows the competition games and is a candidate to become a general manager. Cem is a handsome and rich architect. Aydan's husband, Haluk, is a brain surgeon with a unique ability and almost divine characteristics. However, he has a significant shortcoming. That shortcoming is narrated in the book as follows;

"He had a great lust, but he was lacking the aggression and brutality that would transcend this extraordinary desire into a complete earthquake and shake every moment of their lives with passion" (Altan, 2002: 30).

This discourse indicates that this is just the reason why Aydan has sex with other men. Aydan is having passionate sex with her husband and experiencing intense orgasms, however, that is not enough. According to the discourse of the novel, love should involve hardness because that's what women want. Compassionate husbands are doomed to be

cheated with men who go vulgar as they make love, who are masters of rape-like sex that fits in two minutes. In the author's discourse, compassion is a flaw;

"Haluk, despite his great lust for his wife, makes love with compassion, and never goes vulgar, he cares not to hurt his wife, he never holds or strokes her but just caresses" (Altan, 2002: 31).

On the first pages, it is obvious how the story will progress and end. 'Cheating' is inevitable in a story about the marriage of a loyal and affectionate husband and a sex addicted woman. On the other hand, the people of the story are far from having a clear profile in terms of both their physical appearance and personal characteristics. Inconsistent behaviors, unclear attitudes, and conflicting decisions dominate the novel as characteristics of postmodern novel people. The only thing that is certain is that "every beautiful woman has a bit of exhibitionism and if allowed they would go out naked" (Altan, 2002: 35). Another certainty is violence against women and children in the author's discourse.

"He (Cem) was playing with people like a child playing with his toys. He was enjoying breaking them with brutality peculiar to children" (Altan, 2002: 37).

Saying that a sane child would enjoy breaking his or her toys brutally cannot be claimed by a sane person. The saying that 'let it not be misunderstood' tells that there is no mistake in the analogy and it is unacceptable. It does not mean "everything works in a simile" as perceived by Altan. The depictions with the theme of violence and ferocity go on throughout the novel;

"The next day, the general manager did not really come to work, and the whole building had been trying to figure out what was going on with a tremendous trembling like a poor animal with its neck cut off" (Altan, 2002: 166).

The compassion and care qualities of Aydan's husband are also present in his colleague Hasan, who she had sex with for a while, but quickly got bored. Hasan loves Aydan and wants to be with her again, but Aydan has already found Cem. This situation of Hasan is described in the novel as follows;

"Hasan was looking desperately and pleadingly like a horse with a broken foot" (Altan, 2002: 45).

The discourse that compassionate, loving men are pathetic continues throughout the book. Thus, the male-dominated viewpoint is reproduced. The masculinity is identified with power and violence and its value is measured by these concepts. In this context, love and sex should contain hardness, vulgarity and hurting. As embodied and generalized in Aydan character, the way to make women happy in bed is through violence.

Another factor worth mentioning in the discourse of *Aldatma* novel is the usage of the word "sick". The author frequently refers to "a sick pleasure", "a sick passion", "a sick intuition", "a sick feeling", and a weird sickness". Sick, bizarre, supernatural, ambiguous, obscure, unknown and adjectives of similar ambiguities are dominant in the discourse of the novel. In this discourse, people are not the subjects of the outcome of their actions, but they are rather depicted as passive victims guided by "sick" and "supernatural" pleasure, passions and emotions. "Humans" are mutilated beings with these sick emotions. The novel calls upon the reader to get rid of the responsibility of their behavior. Thus, behaviors that disregard social values are drawn to a legitimate ground. However, behaviors that are contrary to social values are only shown through the female subject. For example, all three men with whom Aydan cheats her husband with are single. Her husband is a successful doctor who loves his wife and does not cheat. It can be said that Aydan is the devil in the male-dominant discourse that seduces innocent men. Namely, Aydan is having sex with Cem. In the meantime, her phone rings. It's her husband. Aydan picks up the phone to make it even more exciting. Talking to her husband, she feels her lover "moving inside". Her

satisfaction has given her such a great pleasure that she will realize that there is no limit left that she would not cross for a little more than that (Altan, 2002: 164).

Another value devalued by the Aydan representation is the "house", which is the concrete world of marriage. She plans to have sex with her boyfriend in her own house while her husband is at home and one night she opens the door to her boyfriend leaving her husband sleeping on the bed. Aydan will remove her underwear before opening the door, and Cem, who has already walked in through the door, will only lower her pants:

"Their sex... took less than a minute. But Aydan, in this shortest sex of her life, took more pleasure than all the sexes she had in her life and passing her teeth to her own flesh not to scream, she flowed into that red cliff from the top of the sky" (Altan, 2002: 205).

In the story, Cem is a single man. However, Aydan is the one who opened her husband's phone while having sex and invited Cem to the house when her husband was at home. It is also stated that Aydan did not regret what she did even slightly. Contrary to the dazzling imagery explaining the pleasure of Aydan, for Cem there is only the expression that "Cem got up and pulled his pants without saying anything. He went out the door quietly as he came in". Cem has done what a man should do and went out silently.

The end of the story is also appropriate for the male-dominated discourse. Cem is bored with Aydan, but Aydan is still desperately desiring Cem. Aydan who is not spoilt by Cem turns into a kleptomaniac. She has fun stealing little things from the houses of her neighbors. However, she gets caught when she steals a wallet full of money and Cem rescues her from going into jail. When they return home from the police station, Aydan tells her husband that the accusations are true and that she has relations with other men. The sorrowful situation of this man who is loyal, honest but guilty of not hurting his wife during sex is narrated as follows:

"Haluk's face was chalk white, he stared with surprise and in disbelief at Aydan like a commander who was shot by the enemy, away from the war while sitting with his officers at his headquarter" (Altan, 2002: 232).

Thus, the husband representation who falls far from the male-dominated perception in life practice is punished.

As a result of the evaluation of the representative characters of Ahmet Altan's Aldatmak novel with ESAY, it can be said:

The marriage, with the dominant discourse of the novel, has been reified as a means of adding "color" to life by violating social normative rules such as loyalty and commitment which are no longer required for postmodern, shallow, upper-class people who are seeking excitement from the homogeneous life between work/home.

It can be predicted that the extramarital relationship in this story, which is told through a female character representing the Turkish superclass, would have very serious consequences if experienced by a woman from a lower class. However, these relations in the novel are described as acceptable and ordinary things. It is meaningful that this novel, which is based on the theme of cheating, defines the phenomenon as a 'game'. The discourse in the novel invites individuals to play as a player for an exciting and happy life that will save them from monotony. This 'game' can sometimes be cheating on the spouse, and sometimes small/big thefts.

Conclusion

In this study, it is seen that the value representations of both novels are very different from each other. On the one hand, a positive and supportive discourse on marriage and family life is dominant in *Aşk-ı Memnu*, on the other hand, in the *Aldatma* novel, marriage is described as a boring phenomenon, which overwhelms women and pushes them to seek

excitement. While in *Aşk-ı Memnu*, the reason why the woman character is having a relationship with another man is explained by falling in love with and the age difference with her husband, the female character in *Aldatma* cheats on her husband in order to have fun, to experience excitement, and to add a color to her life. The representation of the theme of love through female characters is also quite different. In *Aşk-ı Memnu*, while love is represented as a deep and inevitable affection and devotion, in *Aldatma* novel, love represents sex and pleasure.

As a result, in the modernist novel *Aşk-ı Memnu*, the themes of marriage, love and forbidden love are questioned in terms of the values they carry, but they are not negated. However, the attitudes and behaviors of people are emphasized for the reasons for negativity. Nevertheless, a discourse that directly negates marriage, and puts this negativity on women, comes to the forefront in the novel. The characters in the *Aldatma* novel are not held accountable as a subject in terms of their attitudes and behaviors. As a novel of the postmodern era, *Aldatma* symbolizes the disintegration of loyalty, commitment, and similar values as representations of the marriage institution. This is represented by a discourse that puts temporariness over continuity, singular actions over unity, and temporary relationships, excitement and pleasure over love.

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